The Chicago Tribune.

VOL. 24. CHICAGO, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1871. NO. 197.

WASHINGTON.

Yesterday's Proceedings in Congress.

The West Point Resolutions Finally Disposed of.

An Inquiry Ordered Into the Conduct of the Officers.

Important Bills to be Reported by the Reconstruction Committee.

Leading Provisions of the New River and Harbor Appropriation Bill.

The Chronicle Gives Up all Hopes of the Safety of the Tennessee.

Special Dispatch to The Chicago Tribune.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16.

NAVAL CONTRACTORS AGAIN BOB.

The President's veto of the last navigation project by Congress came time slide, granting relief to the contractors who had contracted under act of war and whose property during the rebellion was sustained in the Senate, to-day, without argument, there being but five votes in the negative. The President's veto was upon the joint resolution, as stated in his message, was in the last clause, which repealed the act of March 3, 1864, which conferred upon the Court of Claims power to make allowance in favor of any such person for any advance in the price of any such property, unless such advance could not have been avoided by the exercise of ordinary diligence and prudence on the part of the contractor. Mr. Nye then submitted the same resolution, with the clause omitted, and, with the assertion that the President would sign it if this done, and undertook to put it on its passage; but, Mr. Wilson objecting, the resolution was assigned to its place on the calendar. Many of the claimants under this resolution are now in this city. They say their claims in only in all their claims for losses caused by changes in construction made by order of the Navy Department, and not in accordance with the specifications, and other component adjudicating body. They claim that the Naval Chancellor, under the authority to adjudicate on their claims, was much more interested in covering up incompetent plans of the department than in doing justice to sufferers on account of its mistakes, and that they had no fair opportunity of exhibiting and explaining their claims. Attachments and no pleadings, at this stage of business in Congress, to get the new resolution through both houses, cannot now be foreseen.

EVENING SESSION.

The House, astonished by the experience of last night, that evening sessions are not likely to be profitable, and yet convinced that it must give more time to business, resolved to-day to meet hereafter at 7 o'clock in the morning, and adjourn at 11 o'clock a. m.; and adjourn at 4. Very many members appear to have evening engagements which they prefer to keep, since at Post Office, Ind., Feb. 14, 1871. Hon. Schuyler Colfax, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.: Dear Sir: Allow me to express my gratitude for the action of the House in passing the bill for the relief of the widow and children of the late Schuyler Colfax. Yours, truly, ALEX. H. JENNINGS.

Mr. Wilson, of Iowa, from the Committee on Military Affairs, reported back the bill for the relief of Schuyler Colfax, with the recommendation that it do not pass, and that the House do not concur in the action of the Senate. Mr. Wilson said the committee had considered the subject, and had concluded that it was not the proper thing to do, and that the House should not do it. Mr. Wilson said that

The Chicago Tribune.

[illegible]

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1871.

SPECIAL LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS.

Some years ago, the city of Charleston was authorized to borrow $10,000,000 to build a railroad from that city, through the State of Kentucky, to Chattanooga, in the State of Tennessee. Since that time the corporation thus created has been seeking from the Legislature of Kentucky the privilege of constructing this road upon the route marked out. The city of Louisville, and other towns in Kentucky, are opposed to the road, and have so reported. Bills have been introduced in both houses of Congress which propose to confer upon the Trustees of the city of Cincinnati the right to build this railroad through the State of Kentucky, upon whatever route they may select, if they shall see fit, and to build bridges, dedicated and free, for all time, and generally to have any and all powers of a railroad corporation in Kentucky, the same as though the consent of that State had been obtained. Any suits brought against the said company for any damage, or to restrain it from doing any act necessary to the laws and constitution of Kentucky, are to be transferred from the State Courts to the Federal Courts and to be determined by the law of Congress, anything in the State Constitution or laws to the contrary notwithstanding.

This is a question of more importance than would seem at first blush, as it inaugurates a system of special legislation of which there is no end. The State of Illinois has adopted a constitution which prohibits special legislation. We have also adopted constitutional provisions meeting the power of the State to regulate and control all corporations within its territorial limits. We have been congratulating ourselves upon our happy deliverance from special legislation and all its accompanying and corrupting consequences, but of what avail is the State Constitution if private corporations can obtain from Congress such things which we have, after sad experience, declared that they shall no longer obtain from us. Instead of corrupting and rifling the Legislature of thirty-seven States, procuring from such local charters as they may see fit, these corporations will transfer their claim for special legislation to Congress, and bid defiance to State laws, constitutions, and governments. What may be done in Kentucky, may be done in New York and Illinois; and, should this bill pass into a precedent, the laws of the States passed for the protection of the rights and property of the public will become obsolete. The magnitude and consequences of such legislation are incalculable. If Congress can charter a railroad company to operate in Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and in so doing supersede all the laws and constitutions of those States, and take from the State Courts jurisdiction over them, it can do the same thing in other States. We have adopted constitutional provisions relative to the consolidation of railroads, the election of Directors, the issue of watered stock, the regulation of fares, and the general police authority incident to all State and municipal governments. But, under this precedent, a well-meaning corporation doing business under a charter from this State can obtain a charter from Congress overriding and practically repealing all these provisions. The Northwestern Road is doing business in four States, having separate charters from each; all it has to do is to go to Congress and get a charter, framed to suit its own wants, and so effectually evading those States, their courts, and governments from authority over them, as if the road had never been in Russia. The Erie, New York Central, Pennsylvania Central, and Baltimore & Ohio Roads can obtain charters freeing them from all State control and restraint, and clothing them with unlimited powers of adoption and condemnation. Perhaps this bill does not exempt the property of the railroad from taxation. Congress asserts its controlling authority by prohibiting the Legislature from taxing such property higher than the property of other citizens. It also prohibits the maximum rate of fare for passengers which, of course, supersedes the authority of the State in this behalf to protect the public.

If this power be asserted in the case of railroads, where is the limit to the special legislation for other corporations? There are also bills pending in Congress to incorporate insurance companies, equally independent of State constitutions, laws, and control, and beyond the jurisdiction of State Courts. Also, bills to incorporate loan and trust companies, savings banks, ferry and bridge companies, canal and ditch companies, and mining and manufacturing companies, whose corporate projects are as extensive as the territorial area of the Union. None of these bills have yet become laws, but the fact of their introduction, and of their being formally reported upon by committees, indicates that Congress is to be hereafter the forum of special legislation, and that the several States and the people are to have their constitutions and laws set aside, by charters granted by the General Government. The great battle between the people and chartered monopoly, however unfortunately carried on in the States, is to be turned into a popular defeat by the action of Congress.

It may be that the people of Cincinnati and of Ohio, under a feeling of resentment, desire to punish the State of Kentucky by forcing upon her this Congressional cluster of a railroad, but the history records that when the State of Ohio, under the pressure of the times, shall find irreparable mortgages of all kinds being business in that State, and subject to no State law, except from the legal process of the State Courts, and, perhaps, exempt from taxation, with the right to condemn property, and to supersede other corporations doing business under State laws, and the State deprived of the right to enforce decrees, she will be discovered that the whole power of Kentucky has been dearly purchased. Is there not discretion though not in Congress to arrest this special legislation now, at the beginning?

The President, in his message to Congress upon the bill regulating the oath of office, very properly declared his willingness to sign a bill repealing what is known as the test-oath of 1862. The present condition of the oath business is both novel and remarkable.

A soldier of the Union army appointed to a Federal office has to take an oath, half a century long, that he never served in the rebel army, nor did serve, a long list of disloyal acts. A soldier of the rebel army appointed to a like office, not being able to take the oath, is not required to do so, but has to swear, oath, in which no reference is made to the "recent unpleasantness." A no person, therefore, who is eligible to office under the constitution has to take the oath, except those engaged in the Union side, and of the oath that his opponent only endures to the Union man, Congress ought to set the Sinner of the Fourth Commandment, and abolish it altogether. It no longer excludes any person from holding office, and ought to be repealed.

The Wisconsin Legislature has adopted its regular annual memorial to Congress for the improvement of the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers. The former Legislature memorialized Congress to the same effect, and in accordance with last year's memorial, The Wisconsin memorial is, by Wednesday, the director at the Rochelle (Ogle.) will have the advantage of old Lockmaster, but it will have the doubtful reward coming on the calendar at the fourth session, with 2,000 other probably bills, and be requested to grind. In view of this fact and of the delay and uncertainty which it implies, persons Oshkosh, Portage, the State of Iowa, and the section of Wisconsin bordering on the improvement, together with cash capitalists as those interested on the ground in the enterprise, should unite their forces and carry through the enterprise on Individual ground. It would mortify the General Government beyond measure. We know the suggestion is a very startling one; but when we reflect that these parties, by making the improvement themselves, would own it and reap all the profits accruing from it, we submit that it is not wholly destitute of merit.

AN EMBROGLIO IN THE NAVY.

The Navy of the United States embraces 8,000 enlisted men of all grades. The Digest (sail of the navy is, perhaps, equal to one officer for each twelve men. But in addition to the officers of the line, there is a very large staff department (Surgeons, Engineers, Paymasters, etc.), and there is a chronic quarrel between the two upon the question of relative rank. The House of Representatives takes the side of the staff; the Senate, the side of the line. The House recently passed an act to regulate rank in the navy, and, in the Senate, the Committee, having the Porter side of the case, has reported the bill with amendments. The difference may best be shown by stating how the House passed it, and how the Senate proposes to pass it. We take only a few of grades:

House. Fifteen Medical Directors who shall have the rank of Captain.

Twenty Staff Engineers who shall have the rank of Captain.

Twenty Staff Engineers who shall have the rank of Captain.

Senate. Fifteen Medical Directors who shall rank with Captains.

Twenty Pay Directors who shall rank with Captains.

Twenty Chief Engineers who shall rank with Captains.

And so on through the entire list of staff officers. Upon this question, whether a Medical Director shall be a Captain or only rank with one, the whole navy is in a state of excitement. The question involves one of tailoring also. The difference between the "rank of" and "rank with" controls the shape of the coat, the style of buttons, gold lace, and other matters of deep importance.

We find that the naval staff officers footup as follows:

Medical Inspectors	10
Medical Directors	15
Pay Inspectors	10
Pay Directors	15
Paymasters	15
Assistant Paymasters	30
Total staff officers	95
Naval Constructors	10
Chief Engineers	15
Chief Engineers	15
First Assistant Engineers	15
Second Assistant Engineers	15
Engineer force	340
Naval Constructors	10
Chaplains	45
Professors of Mathematics	10
Civil Engineers	15
Admiral's Secretaries	2
Grand total of staff officers	607

The line officers of the navy are thus enumerated:

Admiral	1
Rear Admirals	10
Commodores	15
Captains	25
Commanders	40
Lieutenant Commanders	70
Lieutenants	125
Masters	70
Ensigns	70
Midshipmen	70
Total active list	716
Retired list, all grades	715
Total line officers	937
Staff active list	607
Staff retired list	607
Total officers of the navy	1,607

The active list of line and staff commissioned officers contains 1,307 officers, and including the 340 midshipmen at the Naval Academy. There were, in July last, 29 vessels of all kinds at sea, and half as many more in use at navy yards. The enlisted force does not exceed six men for each commissioned officer on the active list.

The New York *Tribune* insinuates that the adoption of the revenue reform resolution by the Illinois House of Representatives (original form, the Dogbolt substitute of last year) is, in Lane counsel manner, a rebuke to The Chicago Tribune, because, forsooth, the additional resolutions, offered by Morrison and Springer, were not adopted. Last year, it said that all the Republican platforms of the Western States were susceptible of a protectionist construction except that of Illinois. How it happens that a resolution which, five months ago, was not susceptible of a protectionist construction, has, in the interim, become, to us, is beyond ordinary comprehension. Perhaps the New York *Tribune* is prepared now to indorse the Illinois resolution.

The amendment offered by Mr. Springer would have been adopted by the same vote as that given for the resolution, if it had been supposed that the former added anything to the force of the latter. We opposed Mr. Morrison's amendment because it did not discriminate between untaxed labor for revenue and those for protection, but brought them all under a general censure. If it would accommodate the New York *Tribune* to have the Springer amendment adopted by the Illinois Legislature, it would not be difficult to pass it.

There is a bill pending before Congress to remove the Sub-Treasury from Broadway, New York, and sell the grounds. Mr. Lynch, of Maine, proposes, as a substitute for this bill, that a commission of naval officers shall examine and report upon the Navy Yards at Brooklyn, Charlestown and Kittery are needed for commercial purposes; what could be realized by the sale of the grounds, and whether they could be consolidated. The commission is not to be understood as having any economical end; it is offered under an impression that, instead of having three navy yards, there should be only one, and that a mammoth one at Kittery, in Maine. The proposition of Mr. Lynch would be admirable, if it were amended so as to provide for a commission to be selected from civilians who have no interest in Kittery, or any other place; and that they examine and report whether the further use of government ship yards might not be dispensed with, and great saving to the Treasury and efficiency to the service. They should report, also, the reason why it costs the United States 150 per cent more annually for the repairs, per ton, of the navy than it costs Great Britain, and whether they do not think that the employment of foreman, mechanics, and laborers paid upon political qualifications is not detrimental to the service, injurious to sound labor, and expensive to the government. With these amendments, Mr. Lynch's substitute would be entirely judicious.

It is generally believed among gastronomic circles that a man who is a hog in eating manages to live longer than not, and the Grand Jury of Cook County, who had the misfortune to operate in Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and in so doing violate all the laws and constitutions of those States, and take from the State Courts jurisdiction over them, it can do the same thing in other States. We have adopted constitutional provisions relative to the consolidation of railroads, the election of Directors, the issue of watered stock, the regulation of fares, and the general police authority incident to all State and municipal governments. But, under this precedent, a well-meaning corporation doing business under a charter from this State can obtain a charter from Congress overriding and practically repealing all these provisions. The Northwestern Road is doing business in four States, having separate charters from each; all it has to do is to go to Congress and get a charter, framed to suit its own wants, and so effectually evading those States, their courts, and governments from authority over them, as if the road had never been in Russia. The Erie, New York Central, Pennsylvania Central, and Baltimore & Ohio Roads can obtain charters freeing them from all State control and restraint, and clothing them with unlimited powers of adoption and condemnation. Perhaps this bill does not exempt the property of the railroad from taxation. Congress asserts its controlling authority by prohibiting the Legislature from taxing such property higher than the property of other citizens. It also prohibits the maximum rate of fare for passengers which, of course, supersedes the authority of the State in this behalf to protect the public.

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THE SOUTHWEST.

MISSOURI.

The City Council of Lexington has passed an ordinance granting the right of way for the road over some in the Lindell & Western Railroad.

—The St. Louis & Cairo Railway Company will commence the work on the extension of the road beyond Mt. Vernon as soon as the weather is seasonable. The bridge over the Wabash, at Mt. Vernon, will be completed, and several miles of grading over Prairie Ville are nearly ready for the ties and rails.

IOWA.

The Hon. M. S. Moulton died at Dubuque, a few days ago, aged 41 years. He had been Adjutant-General, Secretary, Director, Attorney, and State Senator.

—Interest in the pathetic appeals of the Virginia which have prevailed in every county in the State, over 10,000 persons have contributed to the Sufferers' Relief.

—A bill recently reported in Congress, Washington County, A. Hall by the name of Hopper upon whatever route they may select, is to be built on the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, and the Legislature of Iowa, in which the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, be followed through Omaha, along the Union Pacific Railroad, and through the Territories, to which point the road is to be completed

AMUSEMENTS.

The "Little Church" Benefit on Yesterday Afternoon.

An Immense Crowd at the Opera House—The Total Receipts, $9,058.10.

Dramatic and Musical Events in Chicago and Abroad.

Chicago was in sheep of concert last evening, and its sheep of enthusiasm upon another, yesterday, in no uncertain manner, upon the occasion of the traditional benefit to "The Little Church Around the Corner," organized by Messrs. Wheelock, Rudolph, Santlow, and Perrott. It was instinctively an unusual significance in the fact that the "Little Church" has been so well and so liberally supported by the Chicago public, that its benefit, yesterday, currently each year, for the last five years, in the Opera House, has been so well attended, and that it could not distinguish it from a third similar one.

The holding of the Ecumenical Council, where a plan of self-government was drawn up, and the capital appropriated, to make the Congress this session of $35,000 for the Assistant Treasurer, fresh in the minds of the public, does the report.

FRACTIONAL CURRENCY.

$5 PACKAGES OF FRACTIONAL CURRENCY TO EXCHANGE FOR Greenbacks OR NATIONAL CURRENCY, AT CHICAGO TRIBUNE OFFICE.

NEW 7-30 GOLD LOAN.

SAFE! PROFITABLE! PERMANENT! JAY COOKE & CO. Offer for Sale at Par and Accrued Interest the First Mortgage Land Grant Gold Bonds OF THE Northern Pacific Railroad Co.

LUNT, PRESTON & KEAN, BANKERS, 47 SOUTH CLARK-ST., Chicago, General Agents for Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri and Northern Indiana.

FLOUR. FLOUR AT RETAIL. LOW PRICES. Best Spring - - - $7 per bbl. Choice White Winter - $8 per bbl. Best White Winter - $9 per bbl. LAST WEEK OF Family Flours. Delivered Gratis Free. IONIC MILLS, Corner Michigan and South Dearborn-sts. J. D. COLE, Jr., Proprietor.

GENTS' WEAR. MEN'S FURNISHING GOODS. New Store—New Stock. True Fit Shirts, Choicest Shirtings, Patent Bosom Drawers, Russian Dances, Laporte's Kid Gloves. FISK, CLARK & FLAGG, 69 & Broadway, N.Y. SHIRTS. SHIRTS. 3 and 4 WASHING TOOL SHIRTS.

MEDICAL. A BOOK FOR THE MILLION. MARRIAGE GUIDE. Price, in Cloth, Gilt, $1. Address, Dr. Dye, Buffalo, N.Y.

BUY ME AND I'LL DO YOU GOOD. ROOT AND PLANT.

OCEAN NAVIGATION. INMAN LINE MAIL STEAMERS. New York, Queenstown, Liverpool, Londonderry and Glasgow. CUNARD LINE. STEAM FROM NEW YORK. Every Wednesday and Saturday. QUEENSTOWN, LONDONDERRY, LIVERPOOL, and GLASGOW.

A BRAVE LITTLE GIRL.

The True Narrative of "A Fruitless Search."

Adventures of a Mormon—Man's Great Adventure.

In the Tribune or railway opinion of a recent visit of the representatives of a young woman who, under the assumed name of "Harry Johnson," used to make sojourns, from Chicago, a variety of attractive and a time spent and was dressed by a young man. The information contained in the following letter, which was received by a friend, seems to lead to the belief that they were mistaken in the belief that this young woman, "Harry" is a man, or "Harry" is a woman, and that the whole story is a fabrication. The letter is from a young man, who, in our opinion, is a man of honor, and who, if he is a man, is a man of honor. The letter is addressed to the Chicago Tribune, and reads as follows:

[illegible]

THE LAW COURTS.

What it Costs to Interfere with a Constable.

Partnership Controversy—Money Lost at Faro—New Suits.

Circuit Court.

CIVIL PLEAS—JUDGE BRADLEY ACT.

A case which is an criminal plane has been [illegible] before the appropriate court, was yesterday ended in the Circuit Court by a verdict for the plaintiff for $200. The plaintiff was Constable Wilson, and the defendant was Mr. Corwith. A controversy arose concerning a [illegible] which Mr. Corwith was alleging or making [illegible] Wilson, the latter, in order to interfere [illegible] Corwith, [illegible] a writ of replevin issued [illegible] Corwith interfered in the business, and [illegible] Wilson, the latter, in order to interfere [illegible]

PARTNERSHIP CONTROVERSY.

A bill was filed in the Circuit Court of Toronto against defendant McMichael and Hugh McDonald, [illegible] Wilson, whose claim that the defendant McMichael, in the [illegible] of Wilson, in Chicago, [illegible] Wilson, [illegible] McMichael, [illegible] McDonald

FOREIGN.

The French Assembly to Form a Republican Government, with Thiers as President.

Unfavorable Impression Caused by Napoleon's Proclamation.

Bismarck's Terms of Peace Said to be Very Reasonable.

English Teachers Brutally Treated by the Japanese at Yeddo.

Provisions of the Bill for the Reorganization of the British Army.

FRANCE.

THE FUTURE FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

[Special Dispatch to the New York World.]

BORDEAUX, Feb. 16.—At the caucus held last night, and attended by a majority of the delegates, it was resolved to form a Provisional Regency, with Thiers as President, Favre as Premier, and Dufaure Minister of Foreign Affairs. The other Ministers are to be M. E. Arago, Pouyer, Dufaure, and Barthely. On a committee of peace the convention will adjourn to Paris, and will remain in a permanent session until a permanent form of government is established.

THE ASSEMBLY CHALLENGED.

BORDEAUX, Feb. 16.—M. Grévy has been chosen President of the Assembly. The vote was cast for him 536, of which 31 Grévy received 505.

THE PEACE PROPOSITIONS.

LONDON, Feb. 16.—In consequence of certain proposed modifications the Bank of France has ceased to discount bills of exchange, and is selling gold before the military chest of 1870, the most valuable portion of which is to be given to the Germans.

PRUSSIAN DEMANDS.

It is understood at this time to be little the worse for wear, and very serviceable, if properly disposed and sent in the triumphal entry that Prince Bismarck and the Prussian Crown Prince and the crowned heads invited guests to witness. It is said that the Prussian Minister has stated to Count Jules Arnim, that if the French people will not have a Prince of Prussia for a king, they may have Prussia to be the cut of a sword, and the Prussian Minister has given to the Prussian Ambassador to Paris, Count Arnim, to be a very reasonable, but yet very decided, ultimatum. The terms of peace are said to be very reasonable, but they are very decided. The Prussian Minister has given to Count Arnim, the Prussian Ambassador, the right of Prussia to 4,000 square miles of French territory, and the payment of an indemnity of 1,000,000,000 of francs, or $200,000,000 in gold, in 10 years. The Prussian Minister has also given to Count Arnim the right of Prussia to take the Alsatian Colony, very valuable to Prussia, and the Prussian Minister has also given to Count Arnim the right of Prussia to take Metz and Strasbourg, and the